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ABSTRACT

Text and tables from a variety of sources are assembled to illustrate the past and present situation of Catholic elementary schools in the United States. Between 1965-66 and 1978-79, the number of Catholic elementary schools has decreased, although other private elementary schools have increased. Lay teachers continue to replace religious community members and diocesan clergy. In 1984-85 about 80 percent of the faculty at Catholic elementary schools were lay teachers. Of the 169 dioceses in 1984-85, 100 (60 percent) supplied useable data about their sources of revenue: about 46 percent from the parish, 41 percent from tuition, and 13 percent from other sources. On the basis of about 83 percent of the schools reporting, over half charge \$500 or more for tuition. In 1970-71, 72 percent of the schools charged less than \$100. Catholic elementary schools spent about \$2 billion for operating expenses in 1984-85. Despite fewer students and schools, higher salaries and other costs led to the national per pupil cost in 1984-85 of \$947, a 21 percent increase over 1982-83. Annual increases in expenditure per student have averaged about 10 percent in the decade since 1972-73. The financial value of the services contributed by religious community members and diocesan clergy is not included in these costs. (MLF)

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UNITED STATES CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS & THEIR FINANCES 1986

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UNITED
STATES
CATHOLIC
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS &
THEIR
FINANCES
1986

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INTRODUCTION

Every year since the 1969-1970 school year, the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) has published statistical reports on Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the United States. Extensive data on these schools and other private schools did not exist prior to that time. This data was needed to understand this significant educational sector, to discuss potential forms of federal and state aid, to inform other educational policy issues, and to encourage improved local management. With the assistance of the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the United States Office of Education, a data base on Catholic schools was established and remains available in the annual publications of the NCEA.

In 1975, the NCEA and the Curriculum Information Center, Inc., began publishing an additional volume. It combined an annual analysis of data on schools, enrollment, and staffing with several charts and, finally, a directory of Catholic schools. This publication is now produced in cooperation with Fisher Publishing Company of Englewood, Colorado, and Market Data Retrieval of Westport, Connecticut.

This year's publication on elementary school finances is a companion piece to another Data Bank publication entitled United States Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1985-1986. It overviews and analyzes the core school, enrollment, and staffing data of the NCEA historical file on both the elementary and secondary levels. As in the past, where similar information is available, comparisons are made in both publications with other private schools as well as the public sector.

Information for this report is gathered from 169 diocesan offices. Sometimes assistance is provided by state Catholic conferences. To these administrators and their staffs, a well deserved word of appreciation is offered. Gratitude must also be expressed to the staff at Fisher Publishing Company and Market Data Retrieval for their assistance.

Finally, a special word of thanks to Frank Bredeweg, C.S.B., for his analysis of the data. This is a task he has performed for many years. His patience and precision is appreciated.

Interested parties who want to further analyze Catholic elementary and secondary data should write to the NCEA publication office for information on the availability of other publications.

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May 1986

UNITED STATES CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
AND THEIR FINANCES 1986

Frank H. Bredeweg, C.S.B.

Catholic elementary and secondary schools remain the major component of private education, and private education remains a significant force affecting the American educational scene. In 1970, the 4 million private elementary school pupils constituted about 11.1% of the 36 million elementary enrollment in the entire country. This percentage declined during the 1970's, because of the losses in Catholic school enrollments, but it increased again to 11.6% by 1980.

Public school enrollments are expected to end their decline during 1985 and 1986. This leveling off should result in a kind of stabilization which would facilitate planning, something public school administrators have found very difficult to do as enrollments have been falling during the declines of the past fifteen years. These declining elementary school enrollments were the result of the population trends of the 1970's, and the fact that there have been fewer school-age children. Total public and private elementary school enrollment is projected to increase to the 1975 level (34 million) by 1992.

PRIVATE SCHOOL TRENDS

According to projections by the National Center for Education Statistics, the private school share of the nation's elementary school enrollment will increase to 12.1% in 1986, and then remain at approximately 12% for the foreseeable future. This growth from 11% to 12% of national enrollment, despite the denial of government support for private education, seems to reflect a clear statement by many parents that private schools play a significant role in American education.

As Table 2 indicates, the percentage of Catholic school enrollment declined from 88.7% in 1965-66 to 65.6% in 1978-79. This is the most recent data. Catholic school enrollments have declined since the late 1960's, but other private schools have increased.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL TRENDS

Compared to the dramatic declines of the early 1970's, Catholic elementary school enrollment has stabilized. The number of schools and pupils has continued to decrease, but this decline has been in proportion to national trends regarding fewer school-age children.

As Table 3 shows, lay teachers continue to replace religious community members and diocesan clergy. On the elementary school level, about 80% of the faculty were lay teachers in 1984-85. Parents and parishes seem to have accepted this reversal of proportions since the 1960's, and lay teachers have upheld the quality and values of Catholic elementary education established primarily by the religious communities of women.

Table No. 1
Elementary Enrollment-Public and Private
1970 to 1992

Reported	Total	Grades K-8 (Thousands)			
		Public	%	Private	%
Fall, 1970. . . .	36,629,000	32,577	88.9	4,052	11.1
1975. . . .	34,187,000	30,487	89.2	3,700	10.8
1980. . . .	31,297,000	27,674	88.4	3,623	11.6
 Projected					
Fall, 1985. . . .	30,236,000	26,636	88.1	3,600	11.9
1986. . . .	30,587,000	26,887	87.9	3,700	12.1
1987. . . .	30,993,000	27,293	88.1	3,700	11.9
1988. . . .	31,583,000	27,783	88.0	3,800	12.0
1989. . . .	32,209,000	28,309	87.9	3,900	12.1
1990. . . .	32,925,000	28,925	87.9	4,000	12.1
1991. . . .	33,457,000	29,457	88.0	4,000	12.0
1992. . . .	34,125,000	30,025	88.0	4,100	12.0

Source: Projections of Education Statistics to 1992-93
National Center for Education Statistics, p.44

Table No. 2
Private Elementary School Enrollments-by Affiliation
1965-66 and 1978-79

	1965-66		1978-79	
	Pupils	%	Pupils	%
Catholic Schools	4,370,300	88.7	2,365,000	65.6
Other Church-Related	376,800	7.6	782,300	21.7
Not Church-Related	181,600	3.7	458,700	12.7
Private Elementary	4,928,700	100.0	3,606,000	100.0

Source: Statistics of Nonpublic Elementary and Secondary Schools,
1965-66, National Center for Education Statistics, p. 7

Private Schools in American Education, National Center
for Education Statistics, p. 52.

Table No. 3
Catholic Elementary School Trends
1976-77 to 1984-85

	Schools	Pupils	Average Size	Teachers	
				Lay	Religious
1976-77.	8,265	2,483,000	300	66,146	33,870
1977-78.	8,223	2,421,000	294	68,231	31,508
1978-79.	8,159	2,365,000	290	69,584	28,955
1979-80.	8,100	2,293,000	283	70,356	27,368
1980-81.	8,043	2,269,000	282	71,841	24,898
1981-82.	7,996	2,266,000	283	72,981	23,866
1982-83.	7,950	2,225,000	280	75,225	22,112
1983-84.	7,937	2,180,000	275	77,684	20,907
1984-85.	7,891	2,120,000	269	79,779	20,031

Reliability of Financial Data

As is the case with most national statistics, the financial figures used in this report are not "facts", but estimates and guidelines. Limited financial information is collected annually from schools and diocesan offices because NCEA is often asked for national trends and estimates.

All of the estimates are of operating revenues and expenses only. Nothing is said of capital improvements or debt retirement. It is important to note that Catholic elementary schools do not generally record the value of the contributed services of religious community members or diocesan clergy, so total operating revenue and expenses are understated by the value of these donated services.

Government Statistics on Private Schools

Government efforts regarding data on private schools are sporadic. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), with the cooperation of the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) and the Council for American Private Education (CAPE), conducted the last extensive survey of private schools in the years 1976-77 through 1978-79. One of the earlier reports on that project made the following statements:

- America's system of private schools represents an important component of the nation's elementary and secondary education system. Private schools
- control about 18% of the schools,
 - enroll about 10% of the students,
 - employ about 11% of the teachers,
 - account for about 10% of the high school graduates,
 - have generally lower pupil/teacher ratios than public schools
 - tend to be smaller in enrollment size than public schools.

It is clear that the role of private schools should not be underestimated.

Improved Financial Management

Until the early 1970's, Catholic elementary schools were supported by large subsidies from the parish, low tuition charges, and the contributed services of the Sisters. Several factors have produced a more complex financial picture today, e.g. the declining number of women religious in the schools, the recognized need for higher salaries, inflation, the movement of people to the suburbs where new construction was costly, and a changed theological atmosphere in which it is acceptable to attend a public school.

Catholic schools and dioceses have responded to this challenge by greatly improving their fiscal management. They have improved the quality of their financial information, and have used this information to analyze and manage their situation. Most parishes now structure the school to resolve its own financial problems, once the school subsidy is agreed upon, creating new responsibilities for administrators and board members. Some parishioners are trained professionals who, together with the diocesan school office, assist with the accounting, budgeting, and management functions. It is still difficult to raise the needed revenue, but Catholic elementary schools are in control of their finances through better management.

National Pupil/Teacher Ratios

The following data published by the National Center for Education Statistics from the 1976-77 to 1978-79 study indicates that private schools have a lower national pupil/teacher ratio than public schools. Both ratios are declining:

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Pupils Per Teacher</u>	
	<u>Public</u>	<u>Private</u>
1976-77.	20.3	18.8
1977-78.	19.9	18.5
1978-79.	19.4	18.5

Source: Selected Public and Private Elementary and Secondary Education Statistics, 1976-77 thru 1978-79

Public school ratios do not distinguish elementary from secondary, so comparisons are not possible.

Catholic Elementary School Ratios

Statements used to be made that Catholic elementary schools had large classes. The same NCES study also produced the best data regarding pupil/teacher ratios in Catholic elementary schools. The approximate class sizes by ranges and regions in 1976-77 were:

	<u>Under 21:1</u>	<u>21- 28</u>	<u>29- 36</u>	<u>Over 36:1</u>	<u>All Schools</u>
New England	13.3%	58.4%	26.8%	1.5%	100.0%
Midwest	20.0	45.2	29.3	5.5	100.0
Great Lakes	19.5	56.3	22.9	1.3	100.0
Plains	44.5	50.6	4.8	.1	100.0
Southeast	22.5	52.9	23.6	1.0	100.0
West/Far West	18.1	38.0	33.9	10.0	100.0
United States	22.1	49.4	24.8	3.7	100.0

About half (49.4%) of all Catholic elementary schools were in the 21-28 pupils per teacher range in 1976-77. A large percentage (22.1%) had less than 21 pupils per teacher. On the basis of this data, classes are clearly manageable and teachable.

Catholic Elementary School Sizes

According to annual publications by Market Data Retrieval on public and private schools, the number and percentage of Catholic elementary schools with less than 300 pupils is increasing. The following totals summarize the changes over the years from 1976-77 to 1984-85:

	<u>1976-77</u>		<u>1984-85</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
Small (under 300).	5,175	62.5	5,429	68.8
Medium (300-500)	1,988	24.0	1,712	21.7
Large (over 500)	1,118	13.5	750	9.5
Total	8,281	100.0	7,891	100.0

The 390 school decline since 1976-77 shows that large and medium size schools have either closed or contributed to the 254 increase in the number of schools under 300 pupils.

Estimate of National Operating Revenue

Of the 169 dioceses in 1984-85, 100 (60%) supplied useable data about the sources of revenue which paid the two (2) billion operating expenses. Since some key dioceses are usually missing, the revenue information reported is not reliable on a state-by-state basis. However, estimates are made on a regional basis.

As shown in Tables 4 and 5, the major share came from subsidies by the parish to the school (\$922.9 million or 46%). Tuition and fees paid \$812.6 million (40.5%). Fundraising activities provided \$146.2 million (7.3%). Diocesan subsidies accounted for 33.4 million nationally. The "Other" revenue category includes all auxiliary activities and services, some of which are offset by expenses.

Regionally, the South and the West have the lowest parish subsidy percentages, receiving most of their revenue from tuition and fees. The Midwest reflects the national average. New England's parish subsidy is well below the national average, but it receives the highest percentage from fundraising activities (13.0%). The Great Lakes and Plains regions receive about one-fourth of their revenue from tuition and about two thirds from parish subsidy.

Comparison of Per Pupil Revenues

Table 6 compares revenue data on a per pupil basis. Parish subsidies remain the major revenue factor, but the increases in tuition and fees have changed the proportions. In 1969-70, parish subsidy supplied about 63% of the revenue and tuition 27%. By 1973-74, parish subsidy had fallen to 53% and tuition had increased to 38%.

Catholic elementary school revenues today are moving along a pattern established as early as 1973-74. Per pupil costs have risen from \$350 in 1973-74 to \$947 in 1984-85, but the percentages have changed relatively little over that eleven-year period. The share carried by tuition increased to 40.5% in 1984-85, as parish subsidy and tuition are becoming equal partners and cornerstones in the support of Catholic elementary schools.

The consistency of these national figures may well indicate that each Catholic elementary school is gradually identifying its own particular revenue combination. As a result, its financial picture is becoming more stable and predictable. Once a school finds the feasible combination, the year-to-year adjustments are less difficult to implement. Nationally, this revenue combination is about 46% from the parish, 41% from tuition, and 13% from wherever it can be raised.

Tuition Charges

Tuition policies and charges are usually of special interest in any discussion of Catholic elementary school finances. On the basis of about 83% schools reporting, Table 7 reports the tuition ranges in recent years.

Tuition policies in Catholic elementary schools have been forced to change greatly since the early 1970's. In 1970-71, 72% of the schools charged less than \$100. By 1973-74, about 70% still charged less than \$200. By 1976-77, about half charged over \$200. By 1983-84, about 59% charged over \$400. In this current 1985-86 school year, about 56% charge over \$500. The percentage of schools in the \$600-\$800 range has increased to 21.5%. Almost one quarter (23%) of the schools charge more than \$800 in 1985-86.

Table No. 4
Elementary School Revenue - Millions of Dollars
1984-85

	Tuition + Fees	Parish Subsidy	Diocesan Subsidy	Fund Raising	Other	Total
New England	\$ 56.6	\$ 31.4	\$ 1.5	\$ 14.7	\$ 8.8	\$ 113.0
Mideast	194.2	315.6	6.4	43.4	27.0	586.6
Great Lakes	161.9	330.5	14.3	27.5	16.5	550.7
Plains	49.6	133.0	1.0	13.1	5.7	202.4
Southeast	150.7	51.7	2.4	19.5	16.4	240.7
West/Far West	199.6	60.7	7.8	28.0	18.2	314.3
United States	\$ 812.6	\$922.9	\$33.4	\$146.2	\$92.6	\$2,007.7

Table No. 5
Elementary School Revenue - by Percentages
1984-85

	Tuition + Fees	Parish Subsidy	Diocesan Subsidy	Fund Raising	Other	Total
New England	50.1%	27.8%	1.3%	13.0%	7.8%	100.0%
Mideast	33.1	53.8	1.1	7.4	4.6	100.0
Great Lakes	29.4	60.0	2.6	5.0	3.0	100.0
Plains	24.5	65.7	0.5	6.5	2.8	100.0
Southeast	62.6	21.5	1.0	8.1	6.8	100.0
West/Far West	63.5	19.3	2.5	8.9	5.8	100.0
United States	40.5	46.0	1.7	7.3	4.5	100.0

Table No. 6
Per Pupil Revenue - Elementary Schools
1973-74 to 1984-85

Source	1973-74		1978-79		1984-85	
	Amt.	%	Amt.	%	Amt.	%
Tuition & Fees	\$135	38.6	\$217	39.6	\$384	40.5
Parish Subsidy	185	52.9	271	49.5	435	46.0
Diocesan Subsidy . . .	4	1.1	8	1.5	16	1.7
Fund Raising & Other .	26	7.4	52	9.4	112	11.8
Per Pupil Revenue	\$350	100.0	\$548	100.0	\$947	100.0

Table No. 7
Tuition and Basic Fees - Elementary Schools

Tuition Range	1981-82		1983-84		1985-86	
	Schools	%	Schools	%	Schools	%
Under \$100.	1,000	12.5	794	10.0	719	9.2
100-199	816	10.2	651	8.2	375	4.8
200-299	1,199	15.0	865	10.9	562	7.2
300-399	1,264	15.8	960	12.1	844	10.8
400-499	1,263	15.8	1,030	13.0	914	11.7
500-599	1,079	13.5	1,034	13.0	930	11.9
600-799	1,031	12.9	1,564	19.7	1,678	21.5
800-999	192	2.4	714	9.0	1,094	14.0
\$1,000 and over . .	152	1.9	325	4.1	695	8.9
Total	7,996	100.0	7,937	100.0	7,811	100.0

Past Estimates of Expenses

The following list of estimated national per pupil costs illustrates in general what has been happening to Catholic elementary school finances:

	<u>PP Cost</u>	<u>Increase</u>
1969-70.	\$200	- 2
1970-71.	240	20.0
1972-73.	315	31.3 (Two Years)
1973-74.	350	11.1
1974-75.	385	10.0
1976-77.	463	20.3 (Two Years)
1977-78.	500	8.0
1978-79.	548	9.6
1980-81.	653	19.2 (Two Years)
1982-83.	782	19.8 (Two Years)
1984-85.	947	21.1 (Two Years)

Annual increases in the per pupil costs have averaged about 10% in the decade since 1972-73. The financial value of the services contributed by religious community members and diocesan clergy is not included in these costs.

Regional Per Pupil Costs

Per pupil costs are not a perfect indicator of geographic differences and trends, but some comparisons may be helpful. The following is a review of these costs at two-year intervals:

	<u>1976-77</u>	<u>1978-79</u>	<u>1980-81</u>	<u>1982-83</u>	<u>1984-85</u>
New England.	\$403	\$546	\$582	\$695	\$821
Mideast.	461	510	617	720	884
Great Lakes.	509	613	700	828	989
Plains	498	584	719	876	1052
Southeast.	425	528	663	831	984
West/Far West.	413	505	634	782	968
United States.	463	548	653	782	947

Per pupils costs for the Great Lakes, Plains, and Southeast regions tend to be above the national average. The Plains region has small schools and the lowest pupil/teacher ratios, factors producing higher per pupil costs. New England and the Mideast have per pupil costs below the national average.

Estimate of National Operating Expenses

Catholic elementary schools spent about \$2 billion for operating expenses in 1984-85. The national per pupil cost rose to \$947, a 21.1% increase over 1982-83. The following summarizes the situation:

	<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>PP Cost</u>
1970-71.	\$ 806,000,000	3,359,300	\$240
1976-77.	\$1,149,000,000	2,483,100	\$463
1977-78.	\$1,213,000,000	2,421,200	\$500
1978-79.	\$1,295,000,000	2,364,800	\$548
1980-81.	\$1,483,000,000	2,269,400	\$653
1982-83.	\$1,741,000,000	2,224,900	\$782
1984-85.	\$2,008,000,000	2,119,900	\$947

Despite fewer students and schools, higher costs have caused the total annual expenditure to increase.

	Elementary		Per Pupil	Estimated
1984-85	Schools	Pupils	Cost	Expense
Connecticut	164	37,812	\$ 911	\$ 34,436,800
Massachusetts	249	68,095	786	53,527,100
New Hampshire	40	7,756	530	4,110,700
Rhode Island	64	16,198	899	14,562,000
Vermont	11	2,615	940	2,458,100
Maine	22	5,133	768	3,942,100
New England	550	137,609	\$ 821	\$ 113,036,800
Delaware	30	10,368	891	\$ 9,237,900
Washington, D.C.	82	24,022	960	23,061,100
Maryland	88	27,100	864	23,414,400
New Jersey	448	122,156	1,017	124,271,400
New York	889	267,644	921	246,524,700
Pennsylvania	735	212,640	753	160,094,500
Midwest	2,272	663,930	\$ 884	\$ 586,604,000
Illinois	641	187,259	985	\$ 184,540,900
Indiana	198	46,925	1,002	47,009,700
Michigan	337	90,389	1,071	96,829,300
Ohio	505	152,903	879	134,361,900
Wisconsin	403	79,501	1,107	88,021,900
Great Lakes	2,084	556,977	\$ 989	\$ 550,763,700
Iowa	139	30,360	1,028	\$ 31,217,400
Kansas	94	19,287	1,082	20,865,500
Minnesota	225	48,373	1,243	60,113,700
Missouri	275	65,161	888	57,849,300
Nebraska	93	18,978	1,115	20,963,000
North Dakota	33	5,525	1,113	6,152,000
South Dakota	27	4,754	1,105	5,254,200
Plains	886	192,438	\$1,052	\$ 202,415,100
Alabama	50	11,440	660	\$ 7,550,400
Arkansas	35	5,535	952	5,269,300
Florida	159	51,543	1,135	58,477,800
Georgia	31	9,131	1,039	9,490,200
Kentucky	151	34,960	975	34,103,300
Louisiana	201	79,640	869	69,237,100
Mississippi	35	8,645	1,021	8,822,400
North Carolina	33	7,026	1,087	7,635,900
South Carolina	26	5,072	838	4,250,300
Tennessee	43	10,004	1,163	11,633,000
Virginia	56	15,966	1,158	18,492,400
West Virginia	32	5,409	1,000	5,409,000
Southeast	852	244,371	\$ 984	\$ 240,671,100
Alaska	4	757	2,183	\$ 1,652,600
Arizona	46	12,110	948	11,482,400
California	606	178,707	888	158,667,700
Colorado	52	12,411	1,092	13,549,700
Hawaii	32	9,905	918	9,092,800
Idaho	12	1,867	864	1,613,100
Montana	21	2,914	1,117	3,255,600
New Mexico	37	7,680	963	7,399,300
Nevada	11	3,057	928	2,836,900
Oklahoma	28	5,447	1,052	5,731,000
Oregon	53	9,128	1,248	11,396,200
Texas	250	58,929	1,040	61,258,600
Utah	7	2,070	769	1,591,800
Washington	81	18,480	1,266	23,392,300
Wyoming	7	1,131	1,202	1,359,500
West/Far West	1,247	324,593	\$ 968	\$ 314,279,500
United States	7,891	2,119,918	\$ 947	\$2,007,770,200

Before concluding this discussion of Catholic elementary school finances, it seems helpful to consider some population trends, current demographic highlights, and a few recent independent studies.

School-Age Population

Both public and private education are affected by the decline in the number of school-age children. The following data and projections are supplied by the Nation Center for Education Statistics (NCES):

Reported	Ages of Students			Total Students
	5-6	7-13	14-17	
1970. . .	7,703,000	28,969,000	15,924,000	52,596,000
1975. . .	7,014,000	26,905,000	17,128,000	51,047,000
1980. . .	6,293,000	24,787,000	16,139,000	47,219,000
Projected				
1985. . .	6,950,000	22,704,000	14,731,000	44,385,000
1986. . .	7,191,000	22,731,000	14,587,000	44,509,000
1987. . .	7,278,000	23,080,000	14,236,000	44,594,000
1988. . .	7,373,000	23,580,000	13,662,000	44,615,000
1989. . .	7,465,000	24,058,000	13,160,000	44,683,000
1990. . .	7,558,000	24,631,000	12,950,000	45,139,000
1991. . .	7,633,000	25,145,000	12,964,000	45,742,000
1992. . .	7,690,000	25,710,000	13,087,000	46,487,000

Source: Projection of Education Statistics to 1992-93, p. 35.

The number of elementary school-age children is increasing once again, beginning with the current 1985-86 school year. On the secondary level, the number of school-age children (14-7) will not stop declining until the 1991-92 school year, when the elementary trends have affected it.

Current Demographic Studies

The world of the 5-18 year old varies from person to person, but current demographic studies tell us that certain dynamics are especially influential. An increasing number of the elementary and secondary pupils coming to us live in poverty, are physically or mentally handicapped, have divorced parents by their 18th birthday, are "latch-key" kids coming home to an empty house, have poorly educated parents, or speak another language. The traditional model of a working father and housewife mother with two children of school age represents only 7% of U.S. households in 1985. In short, many young people will be "at risk" educationally from one or several factors from an early point in their formal schooling.

These demographic studies also tell us that 1983 marked the first time in our history that there were more people over 65 than there were teen-agers, and this will be true for the lifetime of anyone reading this. The Baby Boom population bulge, the 70 million born between 1946 and 1964 reflects people in their 30's and early 40's during the 1980 decade. They will be followed by a much smaller group, now working its way through high school and college. For at least the next decade, 18-26 year olds will become scarce. As for location, most agree that the northeast and midwest have been losing population to the southeast and the southwest, but now it appears that the northeast and midwest are retaining their population. Racial demographics are also important. Each of the nation's 24 largest city school systems has a "minority majority." Two-thirds of all the immigrants in the world are those entering the United States. In general these immigrant groups want to maintain much of their culture, in contrast to the "melting pot" analogy.

Private Schools as Partners in Education

In 1982, the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, in Washington, D.C., published Meeting Human Needs: Toward a New Public Policy. In the section on education, "Private Meets Public: An Examination of Contemporary Education," the authors state:

The growth of private schooling in the face of public school decline is a challenge of such consequence that policy analysts, policy makers, and public school educators cannot afford to ignore it.

Another study supported what many have known throughout the urban changes of the past two decades: Catholic schools are a significant force in urban elementary and secondary education. The study was conducted under contract for the Department of Education, and is entitled School Enrollments and Resource Allocations in Urban Catholic and Public Schools. It lists among its conclusions:

Catholic schools in large cities enroll a large proportion of children from minority backgrounds. Minority enrollments in these Catholic schools are well above the average for Catholic schools nationally.

"Private education appears to represent an increasing share of the American educational effort at the elementary levels," observed Secretary of Education T. H. Bell, when the results of another study were released in December of 1984. According to the survey, private school enrollment rose steadily over a recent three-year period while public school enrollment declined. When compared with 1980, statistics for 1983 show a dramatic upswing in both the number of private schools and their enrollment. The survey was conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics and disclosed that 5.7 million students (12.6%) out of 45.2 million students in all elementary and secondary schools in the country were attending private schools in the Fall of 1983.

Concluding Comments

The National Center for Education Statistics defines private schools as privately controlled by a nonpublic entity and financed from sources other than public taxation or public grants. Possible state and federal aid to nonpublic elementary and secondary education continues to be debated, despite the U.S. Supreme Court decisions of 1971 and 1973 which denied several states the right to legislate limited financial support. Since that time, private schools have served an even greater educational sector, but with relatively little national attention.

Catholic school operating expenses have increased dramatically during the past decade, mostly because of efforts to raise salaries. Additional revenue is badly needed. The total financial value of the services contributed by religious community members and clergy has declined since 1977-78, and this revenue must now be raised from other sources. These and other forces have exerted great financial pressure in recent years. The private school financial situation continues to tighten, and should not be underestimated.